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THE
PRODIGAL SON.
AN
ORATORIO.

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THE
PRODIGAL SON;

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ORATORIO,

Written by Mr. HULL.

K.

Set to MUSIC by Mr. ARNOLD.

There is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God,
over one Sinner that Repenteth.

LUKE, Chap. 15. Ver. 10.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. BELL, near EXETER-EXCHANGE in the STRAND.

MDCCLXXIII.

THE CHARACTERS

FATHER,

ELDEST SON,

YOUNGEST SON, the PRODIGAL,

HIS COMPANIONS.

MOTHER,

DAUGHTER,

FRIENDS and NEIGHBOURS,

RUSTICS.

CHORUS of INVISIBLE SPIRITS.

T O
J O H N B E A R D, Esq.

S I R,

ANY Writer of an Oratorio, an entire Stranger to your private Worth, might, with the utmost Propriety, dedicate such a Work to You, as a grateful Tribute to that high Reputation, which You acquired, and maintained, for a Succession of Years, in this Species of Entertainment. A *Stranger*, I say, might do this ; but a *Friend* leaves that Reputation to speak for itself in the Memory of all true Judges, and Admirers of the *Sacred Drama*. You are therefore desired to accept this Attempt, merely as a Testimony of continual Esteem and Affection, from

Your very sincere Friend,

and obedient Servant,

THOMAS HULL.

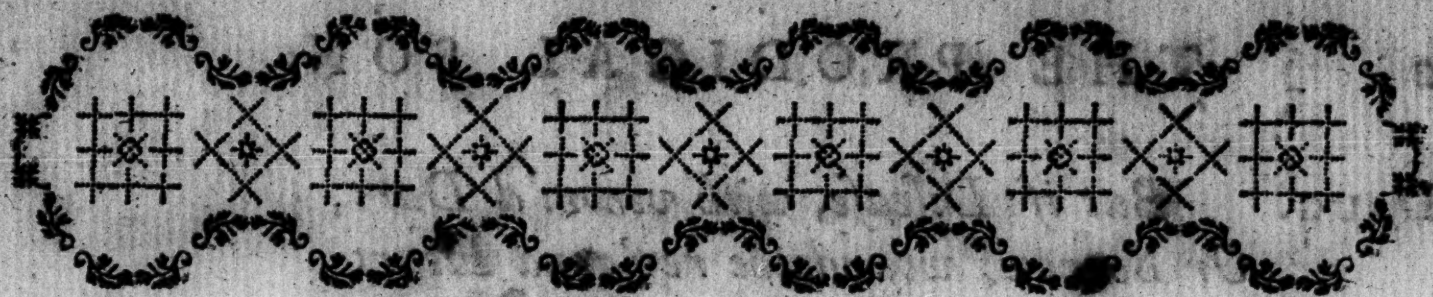
JOHN B. A. R. D.

P. R. 24 R. 10. A. 1. 2-0. 10.

A NY Writer of an Ontario, an entire stranger to you
private World, might, with the same propriety, de-
clare such a Work to You, as a grateful tribute to that high
Reputation, which You acquired, and maintained, for a suc-
cession of Years, in this species of Entertainment. A Writer
say, I say, might do this; but I should leave that Repu-
tion to speak for itself in the Memory of all true Judges, and
Admirers of the *Swiss* *Journal*. You are therefore desired
to accept this *Journal* as a tribute to that Reputation
Honor and Affection.

Your truly affectionate Friend,

THOMAS HULL



T H E
P R O D I G A L S O N.

P A R T F I R S T.

FATHER, MOTHER, E. SON, DAUGHTER, and
CHORUS of NEIGHBOURS.

C H O R U S.

*WHAT dear Delights the Duties bring,
Wherein thus daily we engage!
From filial Love what Comforts spring,
To warm the Hearts of shiv'ring Age!*

A I R.

*E. BRO. Great GOD, while suppliant thus we bend,
Thy kind, thy gracious Hearing lend
To this our fervent Pray'r!
O! may our Sire's remaining Day
Enjoy a Calm, a soft Decay,
His Eve serenely fair!*

B

DAUGH.

2 THE PRODIGAL SON.

DAUG. *But if Disease, with venom'd Dart,
Or Sorrow, wound the rev'rend Heart
Of those who gave us Breath;
Let us, their destin'd Anguish share,
Prevent or dry each painful Tear,
And smoothe the Bed of Death.*

CHORUS repeated.

*What dear Delights the Duties bring,
Wherein thus daily we engage!
From filial Love what Comforts spring,
To warm the Hearts of shiv'ring Age!*

RECITATIVE.

FATH. *Tis true, my pious Children; in my Breast
I feel the kindly Glow. If Love like yours
Could furnish ev'ry Joy that Life requir'd,
I should be amply blest. Beloved Consort!
Improver dear of ev'ry Happiness,
And Light'ner of each Care, begin the Song:
Requite we, far as feeble Age permits,
Their grateful Strain, which each revolving Day,
Due as it smiles, attests. Begin, my Comfort.*

AIR and DUETT.

MOTH. *New Blessings, new Life ye impart,
So oft as this Tribute is giv'n;
The Pray'r of the dutiful Heart,
Like Incense, arises to Heav'n.*

FATH.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

3

FATH. *For this thro' your mortal Estate
In Peace shall ye walk, Hand in Hand;
And your Joys shall be many and great,
And your Days shall be long in the Land.*

RECITATIVE.

FATH. But say, my Children, where's the second Prop
Of my declining Age? Why joins not he
Your Orisons, and claims his wonted Blessing?

MOTH. Why joins he not indeed?

E. SON. My honour'd Father,
High on the Mountain's Summit, that o'er-hangs
The swelling Flood, and of the distant Plains
(Teeming with Wealth) commands an ample View,
I left him gazing on the wide Expanse,
And Joy enlarg'd his Eye.

MOTH. Ah! seest thou not,
Lord of my Life and Love, e'er since thy Hand,
(Profusely kind!) on his ill-judg'd Request,
Allotted him a Portion of thy Wealth,
Averse to these our Duties and Delights,
Our wonted social Converſe, wide he strays,
Shunning thine Eye, thy Counsel--much I fear him.

FATH. Vex not thy tranquil Mind with fancy'd Terrors.
By young Ambition led, and warm Desires,
Error awhile may warp his ductile Heart;
But stubborn Vice, or black Ingratitude--
My Son, sure, knows them not.

B. 2.

AIR

THE PRODIGAL SON.

A I R.

*To yonder Summit stretch thine Eye,
That young, aspiring Elm espy,
The Victim of each angry Sky,
To ev'ry Blast a Prey!
As weak, defenceless, and oppress'd,
By stormy Passions sore distress'd,
My pliant Boy may sink depress'd
In Life's uncertain Day.*

*Like that too easily inclin'd
To change with ev'ry shifting Wind,
Till rooting Time mature his Mind,
And Reason's Shoots appear;
Then all the Virtues bloom apace,
Then, comely in his ripen'd Grace,
He stands, the Glory of the Chace,
Majestically fair!*

RECITATIVE.

MOTH. Oh! may it so betide!--behold, he seeks thee---
Not such, I ween, the Countenance he wore,
Ere dowried with thy Bounty.

The PRODIGAL approaches, with Companions.

PROD. Father, hail!--
Thy Hand hath giv'n me Wealth, I thank thee for it;
But more remains to grant---thy free Consent
To taste the Pleasures, distant Climes afford:
This unbestow'd, the first is valueless,
And thou may'st take it back.

MOTH.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

5

MOTH. Too true my Fears!

Base and ungrateful, is it not enough
Thou hast withdrawn from his indulgent Love,
With jealous Hand, thy Share of worldly Wealth?
Must thou invade the Quiet of his Mind,
That dearest Treasure of his Age? Alas!
Yon spacious Robe, behold, how slight a Covering
For th' Hugeness of his Grief!

A I R.

*With deep Indents his rev'rend Face
Time's Hand hath furrow'd o'er---
Canst thou, perverse, and void of Grace,
Endure to wound him more?
His Sorrows, see! too big to speak,
Swell the pent Heart, and bid it break.*

C H O R U S.

His Sorrows, see! &c.

R E C I T A T I V E.

MOTH. Why alters not thine Eye? Shame, Shame beset thee,
Thou Stranger-Lad!

FATH. Fond Advocate, forbear!--
I am myself again---My Son, behold me!
I have not long to live---and canst thou leave me?
Plead not these falling Tears? for thee, my Child,
More than myself, such Sorrows flow.

PROD.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

PROD.

Why seeks

My Father to retard my rising Hopes?
 Can I, by staying here, recall thy Youth,
 Or add a Moment more when Fate demands thee?
 For Duty's Cares, and Watchings, thou hast here
 More Children, whom domestic Life allures,
 And cool Desires engage: Me ardent Passions
 And wild Extravagance of Soul enflame.

A I R.

*Within one narrow Bound confin'd,
 In one poor Path to move,
 Is Torture to the spacious Mind,
 That thro' a World would rove;
 Rapid as Air, my active Soul,
 Would dart, impatient of Controul,
 From Clime to Clime, from Pole to Pole;
 Each Sweet would taste, each Joy attain,
 Thro' all Creation's wide Domain.*

R E C I T A T I V E.

FATH.

I grieve, my Son, to say, thy youthful Fancy
 Leads thee far wide from Happiness; from Joys,
 That Reason would inspire and give---yet go---
 And may thy Hopes be gratified! tho' much
 I fear thy Disappointment.

SIST.

Oh, my Brother,
 With inattentive Ear, and rocky Heart,
 Mock not this kind Advice;

A I R.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

7

A I R.

*In vain alas ! from Shore to Shore
In search of Bliss we roam,
And strange Delights abroad explore,
Our best reside at home ;
Within the just and pious Heart
Our truest Joys we find,
Which calm and sweet Repose impart,
And leave no Sting behind.*

MOTH. The poison'd Cup
Of Riot and Excess, Youth's surest Bane,
Too early hath he tasted.--Hence ! begone,
Thou, and thy loose Companions ! vex no more
The decent Quiet of our sober Roof,
Or thy fond Father's Heart.

PROD. I wanted not
This Taunt to urge me ; when I next behold
My Mother's Face, perchance with less Displeasure
She may receive me.

E. SON. Stay return, my Brother !
Behold our failing Sire, who long hath flourish'd,
Like the tall Cedar on aspiring LEBANON,
With all his growing Saplings branching round !
Oh ! view him now !--by Time and Grief impair'd,
'Reft of his Strength, he bends with every Breeze.

MOTH. No longer waste your unavailing Suit
On that obdurate Wretch, who scouls Contempt
On these your kind Persuasions. To yon Sage

Turn

Turn your Attention; Lo, his trembling Limbs,
 His swimming Eyes! Ah, catch him, ere he fall,
 Ye, pious Pair, and to the Couch convey
 Your rev'rend Charge. Tis well-Hear me, thou, senseless
 Of ev'ry Good, thy God hath show'd upon thee,
 Hear me this once, and tremble!--
 Think, not to bear away thy Crimes unpunish'd--
 Oh! no--- peculiar Plagues are kept in Store
 For disobedient Children.

PROD. to } Why is thine Eye thus fix'd? Can the weak Breath
 1st. Com. } Of an incensed Woman thus transform thee
 A Monument of Wonder? Rouze! awake!
 And join our wonted Gladness--let the Voice
 Of Music start him from this gloomy Dream,
 Then lead him forth to Realms of varied Bliss,
 And, as we pass, let ev'ry Hill and Dale
 Repeat the jocund Notes.

SONG and CHORUS.

*Wake to Musick, Mirth, and Love!
 Let us all the Transports prove,
 Wine and Beauty can inspire;
 Wine exalts our am'rous Fire.*

CHORUS.

Wake to Music &c.

PROD.

*Welcome the capacious Bowl,
 Welcome to my thirsty Soul!
 Speed the copious Draught around,
 Care and Thought alike be drown'd!*

CHO-

THE PRODIGAL SON.

9

CHORUS.

Welcome the capacious, &c.

PROD.

*Welcome, welcome Woman's Charms,
Welcome to my ardent Arms,
Welcome Charms that raise Desire,
Welcome Wine that feeds the Fire!*

CHORUS.

Welcome, Welcome, &c.

END of the FIRST PART.

C

PART

PART SECOND.

CHORUS OF NEIGHBOURS.

CHORUS.

*ARISE, great God, with Vengeance rise,
The black unnat'ral Wretch confound,
Who dares thy great Behests despise,
Who dares a Parent's Bosom wound!*

MOTHER *advances.*

RECITATIVE.

MOTH. No more, my Friends---Heav'n, in its own due Time,
Will sentence and chastise. From the sick Bed,
And pious Task arose, my Mind is calm,
And harbours no Resentment. All my Thoughts
Are on this Suff'rer turn'd. While thus I sue,
That Nature's great Restorer may allay
His fore Inquietudes, his bitter Pangs,
With your good Wishes aid the suppliant Strain,
Oh! aid, and waft it to the eternal Throne!

AIR.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

II

A I R.

MOTH. *Grant, holy Lord, that dewy Sleep
May shed its balmy Comforts o'er him!
In gentle Dreams his Senses steep,
And place ideal Joys before him,
That his waking Thoughts may be
Full of Hope, and full of thee!*

PRODIGAL and COMPANIONS.

PROD. *Why this Suspense? Why should a Moment's Pause
Pall the rich Pleasures of our glowing Hearts?
Joy, like the rapid Ocean's ceaseless Wave,
With unremitting Force should pour along,
While Strength and Nature aid the gen'rous Course.*

A I R and C H O R U S.

PROD. *With Love and Impatience I burn,
In our Revels let Love have his Turn!
From Pleasure to Pleasure we range,
Say, say, what is Life without Change?
Away with the Vintage, away with the Bowl,
Till Beauty hath pour'd her Delights on my Soul.*

C H O R U S.

Away with the Vintage, &c.

II.

PROD. *Then again o'er the Flagon we meet,
The Roof-rending Chorus repeat;*

C 2.

As

THE PRODIGAL SON.

*As the Goblet the Table o'erflows,
 Our Fullness of Transport it shews;
 Thus, Thus, let us revel in various Delight,
 Let Wine crown the Day and let Love crown the Night*

CHORUS.

Thus, thus, let us revel, &c.

RECITATIVE.

2d. Com. See, see, behold thy Comrade! say, thou Dreamer,
 Why, with reluctant Hand, didst thou upheave
 The brimming Bowl, and wherefore did thy Lip
 Shun the rich Draught distasteful?

1st. Com. With Disgust,
 Or Shame---I know not what---my Mind is charg'd

A I R.

*Within my dark, my troubled Soul,
 What sudden Doubts tumultuous rowl!
 Some awful Pow'r usurps my Heart,
 Some awful Voice, cries out, "Depart;"
 "Th' intemperate Board, it's Riots shun,
 " Destruction hastes---away!--- begone!---*

RECITATIVE.

PROD. Stay, my Friend,
 And share my Joys! thy lov'd Companion-ship
 Gives them a double Relish.

2d. Com. Let him go;

Our

THE PRODIGAL SON. 13

Our Portion is the more. See where approacheth,
In loose Attire, a lovely Train of Beauties ;
With tripping Gait, and wanton Eye, they court
Our ardent Wishes. In delightful Strife
Now war we for the fairest !

PROD. Various Fancy
In each beholds Attraction. Here I fix--
These auburn Locks, these glowing Cheeks, these Eyes,
Practis'd in Love's soft Eloquence, invite me.

TRIO and CHORUS.

*Hit her, fair one, hit her bend,
Warm Desires thy Steps attend !*

2d. COM. *Hit her, fair one, speed thy Way,
Ardent Throbs brook no Delay !*

3d. COM. *Hit her, fair one, hit her dart,
Damp not thou a burning Heart !*

PROD. *Grandeur thee and Wealth await,
All the Luxury of State.*

2d. COM. *Thee the full the festive Board,
All that Fruits and Wines afford.*

3d. COM. *Thee the Pipe, the sprightly Ball,
Haste thee, Nymph, at Music's call !*

CHORUS. *Hit her, fair one, hit her bend,
Warm Desires thy Steps attend !*

RECITATIVE.

2d. COM. What Heart, but to the Throne of Beauty bows,
And owns her Pow'r resistless?--See relenting
Thy fav'rite Comrade !

1st. COM.

1st. Com. No such impious Motive
 Recalls my Step; but Zeal for thee, my Friend.
 Read'st thou not in my Eye some horrid Tidings?
 Within this Land, fell FAMINE, meagre Fiend,
 With ghastly Mein advances. Wide he stalks,
 And, as he goes, destroys; the wretched Rustic
 Threats Violation to thy treasur'd Hoards,
 To gratify his Wants. Rouze thee, my Friend,
 And ope thine Eyes to Virtue!

*What Stores have been consum'd!
 What Days to Riot doom'd!
 See! Ruin aims the deadly Blow,
 While yet possess'd of Pow'r;
 Repent the lavish Hour!
 Repent, 'ere sunk in endless woe!*

RECITATIVE.

PROD. Hence! Begone!
 Thou Poison to our Joys! and brood alone
 O'er thy spleen-born Suggestions. While the Moment
 Of Mirth invites, no Thought of future Ill
 Shall interrupt th' Enjoyment. Let us on.

CHORUS.

*The Heart, inflam'd with am'rous Fire,
 Glowing Charms and ripe Desire,*

Scorns

THE PRODIGAL SON.

15

*Scorns to yield to freezing Fear,
Fear and Doubt are Strangers here;
Sov'reign of the Bosom's Throne,
Love controuls, and Love alone.*

Eldest BROTHER and SISTER.

RECITATIVE.

E. BRO. Sister, I trust our Father's long Disease
Will soon have End; his Med'cines have prevail'd;
And Nature's great Restorative begins
To crown our earnest Pray'rs.

SIST. Ev'n now I left him
Folded in balmy Sleep. With softest Breathings
His Bosom mildly heav'd. Some heav'nly Dream
Inspir'd, and whisper'd Comfort to his Heart;
For, ever and anon, a gentle Smile
Stole on his Cheek, while Life's recruited Stream,
In graceful Tints, gave Signs of inward Joy.

E. BRO. Thanks, gracious God! Hereon, beloved Sister,
I build a Trust immoveable.

A I R.

*When pious Hearts, with Zeal unfeign'd,
The Throne of Heav'n address,
The KING OF KINGS an Ear will lend,
Prone to pity, save, and bless.*

FATHER,

THE PRODIGAL SON.

FATHER, MOTHER, and NEIGHBOURS *advance.*

RECITATIVE.

SIST. And see! confirming this your pious Faith,
Our Sire has left his Couch; with added Strength
He moves this Way. Advance we to his Aid!

FATH. Ye (wond'rous Pair!) Ye, who can make Amends
For greater Pains, than one unduteous Boy
Can give an aged Parent's failing Heart,
Partake your Mother's Joy; from softest Sleep
Gently releas'd, some more than wonted Spirit
Informs my Mind, my Frame appears new-brac'd,
And every Pain is flown.

A I R.

*Returning Health bath warm'd me,
Returning Strength bath arm'd me
To greet once more th' all-cheering Day;
With active Heat
My Pulses beat,
In nimble Round
My Spirits bound,
And revel in the sunny Ray.*

RECITATIVE.

MOTH. Yes, yes, my Children;
The dearest Help-mate, Wife yet ever knew,
Heav'n has restor'd to my desiring Soul;
How shall I speak my Rapture, how my Praise?

QUAR-

QUARTETTO and CHORUS.

*To pay our God the Tribute due,
Faint is Utterance, Words are few.*

SIST. *Bended Knees, and prostrate Heart,
Grateful Thanks can best impart.*

E. BRO. *What the faltering Tongue denies
The Fullness of the Soul supplies.*

FATH. *Yet your feeble Efforts try,
Lift your Voices, lift them high!*

CHORUS. *Yet your feeble Efforts, &c.*

FATH. *When feeling Hearts their Thanks prefer,
Each Sigh, each Thought, to Heav'n is dear.*

CHORUS. *When feeling Hearts, &c.*

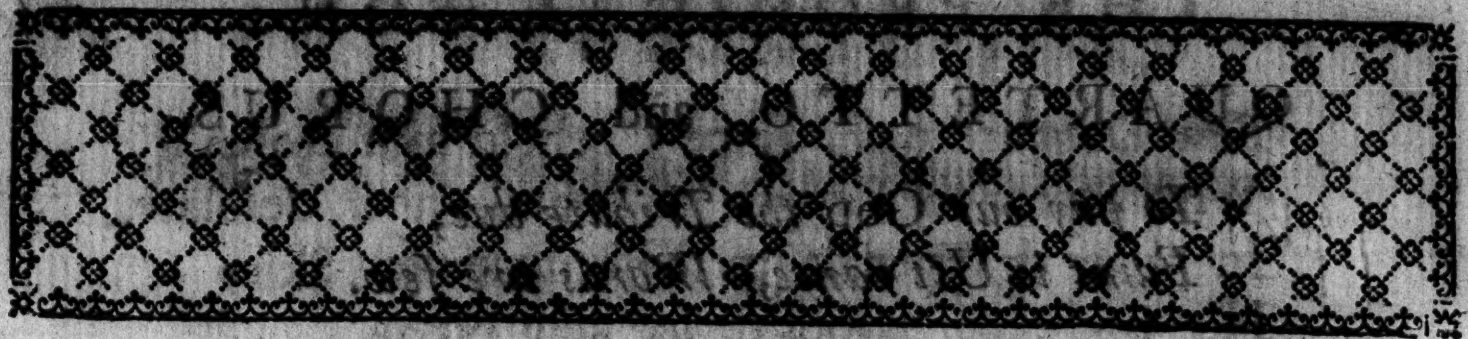
FATH. *Our God, who reigns in endless State,
Is mild as just, and kind as great.*

CHORUS. *Our God, who reigns in endless State,
Is mild as just, and kind as great.*

END of the SECOND PART.

D

PART



PART THIRD.

CHORUS OF RUSTICS.

ALL gracious God ! Oh ! hear our Cry !
Hear and redress---we faint---we dye.
No Dew to cheer the parching Ground,
A sad, a dreary Waste around !
The Hind surveys her helpless Brood,
Surveys, and mourns their Want of Food !
Each living Thing, in wild Despair,
With piercing Howlings rends the Air.
All gracious God ! Oh ! hear our Cry !
Hear and redress---we faint---we dye.

FIRST COMPANION.

RECITATIVE.

1st. Com. A little longer yet, ye feeble Limbs,
Support my languid Frame ! While any Share
Of Strength remains, I must not, cannot leave
This miserable Man. Oh ! had he ta'en
My friendly Admonition !---What a Change !

Few

THE PRODIGAL SON.

19

Few Days are past, since I beheld him crown'd
With Stores for Length of Years---now, desolate,
In tatter'd Weeds, (to these inclement Skies
His Body half expos'd) for very Need,
He tends a Rustic's Swine, and yearns to feed
On Husks and Filth with his uncleanly Charge.
Lo! now he starts, all frantic with his Woes;
His haggard Eye-Balls, and up-staring Hair,
Speak his torn Mind---this Way, and that, he flies,
As tho' he shunn'd himself.

PRODIGAL advances.

Destruction come!--
In thy most horrid Shape---I shun thee not---
Is there within thy Treasury of Plagues
Worse than I now endure? The very Rustics
Taunt and deride my Wants---How many Servants,
Within my Father's House, have Bread to spare,
While I with Hunger sink---Destruction, come!

A I R.

*Unappal'd, thou Sky, behold me,
All thy Plagues around me show'r,
In thy bluest Fires enfold me,
Thus I dare thy utmost Pow'r.*

RECIT. accompanied.

What sudden Bolt! O wish'd-for Blow! my Heart
Is cold---my Blood is froze---my fightless Balls

D 2

Are

THE PRODIGAL SON.

Are sunk in utter Darkness. Friendly Death,
These are thy Terrors--thus I give thee Welcome:

1st. Com. Lo! dash'd to Earth, a perish'd Monument
Of black Despair he seems!

A I R.

In this dread Moment, gracious God,

His Pangs with Pity see;

Awake Remorse within his Breast,

And turn his Heart to thee!

O! let the Spirit of thy Grace

His wand'ring Sense reclaim;

That yet the Suff'rer may repent,

And live to praise thy Name!

RECITATIVE.

PROD. Oh, ruthless Fate!

Hast thou again unclos'd my Eyes, to view

These Scenes of Desolation? Well I hop'd

I had been past the Reach of Pain and Grief;

But Oh! I wake to deeper Sense of Woe,

Such as o'erbears my Spirits.---Every Nerve

To more than Infant-weakness is relax'd.

Ha! what are these---these falling Drops, that scald

The Cheek, they moisten? my full Bosom glows.

Methinks, I now could pray--But in what Terms

Can Guilt, like mine, address the Throne of Grace?

SOLEMN

THE PRODIGAL SON.

21

SOLEMN CHORUS, by INVISIBLE SPIRITS.

Fear not---fear not---waft thy Pray'r!

Waft thy Thoughts, thy Wishes there!

Damp not now this infant Flame!

GOD, and Mercy, are the same.

RECITATIVE.

PROD. How can I hope my Crimes should be forgiv'n?
How shall I dare look up, who, unconcern'd,
Could hear the Cry of wailing Misery,
While Plenty crown'd me? I, who gave to Luxury,
To wretched Wantons, and intemperate Boards,
The poor Man's Dole?—No, I am past Forgiveness.

CHORUS repeated.

Fear not, &c.

1st. COM. Oh! blessed Sight! those bended Knees! that Look,
Of meek, submissive, silent, Adoration,
Imploring Strength and Counsel from above!
Angels of Good, aid, and direct his Mind!

PROD. I will arise, and go unto my Father,
And, stretch'd in Dust beneath his rev'rend Feet,
Thus will I say unto him:

*“Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy Sight,
“and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.”*

RECIT.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

RECITATIVE.

1st. Com. Bless'd be our God! who hath inclin'd his Ear,
And turn'd this Sinner's Heart! let me but bear
This feeble Frame along, till I behold him
Clasp'd in a Father's Arms, and then---

SYMPHONY of AERIAL MUSIC.

But hark!

What heav'nly Sounds! enkindling all my Soul
With Wonder and Delight!

ATTEND. SPIRIT. Thou chosen Man!

Whose conscious Heart spontaneous cou'd resist
Th' intoxicating Draught of false Delight,
Warn thy lost Friend, mourn o'er his fall'n Estate,
And share his Troubles, to redeem his Soul,

AIR and CHORUS of ATTENDANT SPIRITS.

SPIR.

Go hence, in Triumph, go!

Here ends thy Date of Woe---

No longer shall thy Bosom mourn---

CHORUS.

Go hence, &c.

SPIR.

Bright Friendship and Renown

Thy future Days shall crown;

To Pleasure and to Peace return.

CHORUS.

Bright Friendship, &c.

FATHER,

RECIT.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

23

FATHER, MOTHER, Elder BROTHER, and SISTER.

RECITATIVE.

FATH. Nay, fear me not, my Consort ; bounteous Heaven
Hath well repair'd my Strength ; I can again
Join in the wholesome Labours of the Field.

MOTH. My Life, be cautious, nor, with hasty Zeal,
Risque the dear Blessing you so lately gain'd ;
The Air, from recent copious Show'rs, is chill ;
These new-recover'd Beams but faintly shine,
And the rich Drops yet glisten on the Grass.
Lo ! here our duteous Boy ! he will prevent
Thy too-advent'rous Care.

E. BRO. With Pride, my Father--
My Life expos'd, to shield thy sacred Health,
Were Transport to my Soul.

FATH. Go, my Support !
My Comfort, my Delight !

SIST. O ! had a Portion
Of that sweet Virtue, which inspires this Brother,
Glow'd in the other's Breast, my honour'd Sire
Had known no Sorrows, in his Eve of Life.

FATH. Forbear, my Child, nor let the impious Breath
Of Murmur at our Lot pollute thy Lips ;
Heav'n fees, and judges best. Recall to Mind
The comfortable Rule I gave thy Youth,
Should

THE PRODIGAL SON!

Should Pain or Disappointment vex thy Heart.
Follow us in.

SIST. Yes, yes, thou best of Fathers,
Ne'er from my Mind shall that good Precept part.

A. I. R.

*Against the Pow'r and Will divine,
Let no vain Mortal dare repine;
The KING of HEAV'N alike is wise
In what he grants, and what denies.*

NEIGHBOUR approaches.

RECITATIVE.

NEIGHB. Hail, virtuous Fair! prepare thy Heart to taste
Of Pleasure mix'd with Pain. Thy wayward Brother
Is to these Plains return'd; but Oh! how chang'd!
A Beggar's abject Weeds begirt his Loins;
And in his Visage Shame, Remorse, and Anguish,
Have fix'd their Residence.

SIST. May that Remorse
Plead for his Pardon in my Father's Breast!

NEIGHB. Distant, and awe-struck, lo! he eyes the Roof,
Where once his dearest Comfort dwelt!--he eyes,
But fears to enter now.

SIST. And see, my Father---
(Millions of Blessings warm his precious Heart!)

See

See how, thro' Haste, he totters down the Steps,
 And teaches Age to vie with agile Youth,
 Eager to clasp, and take the Wand'rer in.
 Lo! now the sacred, dear Embrace! Close-lock'd
 To the full Bosom of my kneeling Brother,
 (Whom from the Dust he piously hath rais'd)
 Tears are their only Language: let us on
 To share the Greetings--but with cautious Step,
 Lest, by too hasty Zeal, we interrupt
 These first strong Workings of the mighty Joy,
 Which bears too heavy on that aged Breast.

FATHER, MOTHER, and PRODIGAL.

A I R

PROD.

*Against high Heav'n, and thee, my Stree,
 Such great Offences have I done,
 A Child's dear Claim I do not ask,
 No more deserve the Name of Son;
 Thy lowest Servant let me be,
 That State alas! too good for me.*

RECITATIVE.

FATH.

*O! Welcome, welcome! Heav'n so deal with me,
 As I receive my Boy! -- Call, call my Friends!
 My Neighbours! Servants!--Let them all attend,
 And share the old Man's Rapture! Rich Attire,
 And costly Jewels bring, to deck my Wand'rer;
 Feasting and Music shall proclaim his Welcome,
 And crown his penitential Heart with Joy!*

E

TRIO

TRIO.

FATH. *O! Repentance how precious!*
 PROD. *O! Pardon how dear!*
 BOTH. *These Joys are too mighty for Mortal to bear!*
 MOTH. *Delighted on such do the Angels look down,
 Then waft the glad Tidings to Mercy's bright Throne.*
 FATH. *O! Repentance, &c.*
 PROD. *O! Pardon, &c.*

Eldest SON advances.

RECITATIVE.

E. SON: For whom, my Father, these unusual Sounds,
 And Preparations?

FATH. *O! my virtuous Son!*
 Thy once-dead Brother is alive again;
 With pious Penitence, once more he seeks
 A Parent's Roof, and Blessing.

E. SON. Then this Prodigal,
 Who hath consum'd thy Wealth in vicious Riot,
 For very Need return'd, reaps a Reward
 Unknown to blameless Duty. From my Youth,
 When have I disobey'd thee? Yet for me
 Ne'er was the Minstrel call'd, the Feast prepar'd.

FATH. My steady Boy; thou Treasure of my Age,
 All, all I have, is thine. Not that thy Brother
 Returns, thy Rival in a Father's Love;
 But that a Sinner is reform'd, I joy.
 For this I call the Guests, and raise the Song;
 So Reason bids, and Heav'n itself approves.

E. SON.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

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E. SON. 'Tis true, my Father!--Thro' a fond Excess
Of Love, my Duty err'd--O! Pardon! Pardon!
Lo! he returns, cloath'd as befits thy Son;
Our Neighbours and Relations gather'd round,
With Looks of Transport hail his glad Return.
Let me support thy rev'rend Steps to meet them,
Embrace my Brother, and improve his Rapture!

FATHER, MOTHER, E. SON, DAUGHTER, PRODIGAL, and
NEIGHBOURS.

A I R.

MOTH. *Friends, who oft partook my Care,
Now my rising Pleasure share!
Share, and aid this grateful Strain,
That tries to speak my Bliss in vain;
Behold, behold, my new-born Joy,
My late-restor'd, repentant Boy!*

G R A N D C H O R U S.

*Begin---each tuneful Voice employ,
With ev'ry Pow'r of Music join'd,
To spread abroad, in Sounds of Joy,
This welcome Truth to all Mankind.*

WHEN GRACE ON GUILTY MINDS HATH BEAM'D,
AND SINNERS LEAVE THE WICKED WAY,
DEVOUTLY BENT NO MORE TO STRAY,
CELESTIAL THRONES WITH TRANSPORT RING,
AND ANGEL-CHOIRS EXULTING SING.
A MAN RECLAIM'D, A SOUL REDEEM'D!

F I N I S

ch
ons

THE PRODIGAL SON.

E. Son. 'Tis true, my Father!—This a load Excess
I have, my Duty, O! Pardon! Pardon!
Let the return, should I address my Son;
Our Neighbourhood and Relations gather'd round,
With Looks of Transport hail his glad Return,
Let me report thy new and steps to meet them,
I'll show my Brother, and improve his Rapine!
FATHER, MOTHER, E. Son, DAUGHTER, PRODIGAL, and
NEIGHBOURS.

A I R

Mother. I'll show my Father, and improve his Rapine!
I'll show my Father, and improve his Rapine!
I'll show my Father, and improve his Rapine!
I'll show my Father, and improve his Rapine!
I'll show my Father, and improve his Rapine!

GRAND CHORUS.

Begin—each transfer'd to the region
With every Power of Magic join'd,
To speak abroad, in language of Joy,
This welcome word to all mankind.

When GRACE ON GUILTY MINDS hath beam'd,
And SINNERS LEAVE THE WICKED WAY,
DEVOTELY BENT NO MORE TO STRAY,
CELESTIAL THRONES WITH TRANSPORT RING,
AND ANGEL-CHOIRS EXULTING SING
A MAN RECLAIM'D, A SOUL REDEM'D!

FINIS.